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Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 205301-0001

Re: Comments on Microsoft Antitrust Settlement

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

It has been well over three years that I have watched the litigation debacle among the Department of Justice, states and other lawsuits against Microsoft.

I have been dismayed that Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's decision was allowed to stand in the first place, when it was obvious that he was biased before the trial ended and his ruling ought to have been tossed out in its entirety. That the litigation continues to date without settlement is egregious.

I am indignant that millions of our tax dollars have been wasted in pursuit of Microsoft, a tax-paying corporation that employs over 40,000 workers worldwide. In the past twenty-five years, it has been known for its software advances and innovation. It has established industry standards where there were none, advanced computer science, and single handedly has been the catalyst of the technological boom. They are only guilty of "being very successful" in what they do.

The DOJ's lawsuit has and continues to financially injure retirees, mutual funds, PERS state retirement funds, individual investors, and anyone who has invested in Microsoft. "How in good conscious can the department justify this?" So far, the DOJ has done more to disrupt business, injure the public, damage the economy and technology sector, and financial markets combined than what you claim Microsoft has done to the consumer.

Finally, it appeared there would be a settlement with Microsoft offering to undergo close scrutiny and willing to spend a billion dollars on computer science, hardware and software, teacher training and on-going assistance in the most needy schools. It is an innovative idea and adequate settlement offer, all of which is geared to help our youth become computer literate, as the business world will demand and expect of them for entry-level positions.

However, Judge Motz denied the offer, since he believes it gives Microsoft an unfair advantage and allows them to expand their market share into the school system. The judge fails to recognize that he alone is denying impoverished school districts, and the children therein, access to a computer education they will need in order to compete for jobs in the real world. He would rather have children

computer-illiterate, because Microsoft might just benefit in some way. What's wrong with this picture?

His ruling is notably without justification, denying Microsoft's good faith offer to settle. *Even in a perfect world, the judge's decision would still be wrong, very wrong.*

This litigation is a perfect example of an imperfect legal system. The case has gone on far beyond anyone's imagination, and has become a virtual nightmare. The DOJ has seemingly painted itself into a corner, looking very inept. From my viewpoint, it seems the entire justice system needs a complete overhaul, because of its anti-business bias, and predilection against what constitutes normal and free competition in the business world. Judges need to be knowledgeable in the law, of course, but they also need to understand business, economics, capitalism, and who succeeds in business and why. Innovation is not a dirty word. Until now, our country has led the world in creativity and innovation thanks to Microsoft. Take a good look at all the companies that have stood on the shoulders of Microsoft and have ably competed in the marketplace for the last twenty-five years. The list is huge.

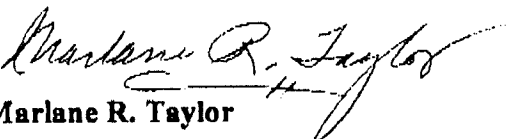
That Microsoft is willing to follow the provisions set forth, it should satisfy every one. It is past time to end this debacle. The states that are holding out simply want to pan for gold in Microsoft's deep pockets.

There isn't one rational reason not to grant Microsoft's substantial offer of settlement, because, it IS in the public's interest.

The litigation has already cost millions of tax dollars for nothing. Moreover, the DOJ is directly responsible for the untold millions that it has cost Microsoft for its legal defense and representation--not to mention the financial fallout affecting millions of investors.

Enough of this: Settle the case.

Sincerely,


Marlane R. Taylor